

Remarks

Applicants thank the Examiner for the Allowance, dated October 10, 2003, of the claims. Through an office action dated September 10, 2003, in another case, the undersigned became aware of a prior art reference, namely French Patent No. 1,362,417 to Koch, that Applicants believe may be relevant to some of the allowed claims. Applicants therefore request continued examination of the Application in light of this and other references disclosed in the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

Applicants have amended independent claims 23, 40, 44, and 50 in light of French Patent No. 1,362,417 to Koch. To the best of Applicants' understanding and the undersigned's partial, informal (internet-based) translation of the reference, French Koch discloses a motor 22 connected to a coupling rod 23 that is removably connected to an arm 9' of wheel 9 that enables alternate tilting of a patient support apparatus. While the motor and coupling rod mechanism appears to be able to rotate the patient support apparatus across a short arc intersecting the horizontal position of the patient support apparatus, the motor and coupling rod mechanism does not appear to be capable of rotating the patient support apparatus from the supine to the prone position. Rather, it appears that rotation from the supine to the prone position is accomplished manually. Applicants are not aware of any motivation or suggestion to modify the French Koch patient support apparatus to enable a motor to perform supine-to-prone positioning.

In view of the amendments to claims 23, 40, 44, and 50, Applicants respectfully request that the application be allowed and passed to issue. The Commissioner is permitted to deduct any fees that may be required from Deposit Account No. 500-326.

Respectfully submitted,



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